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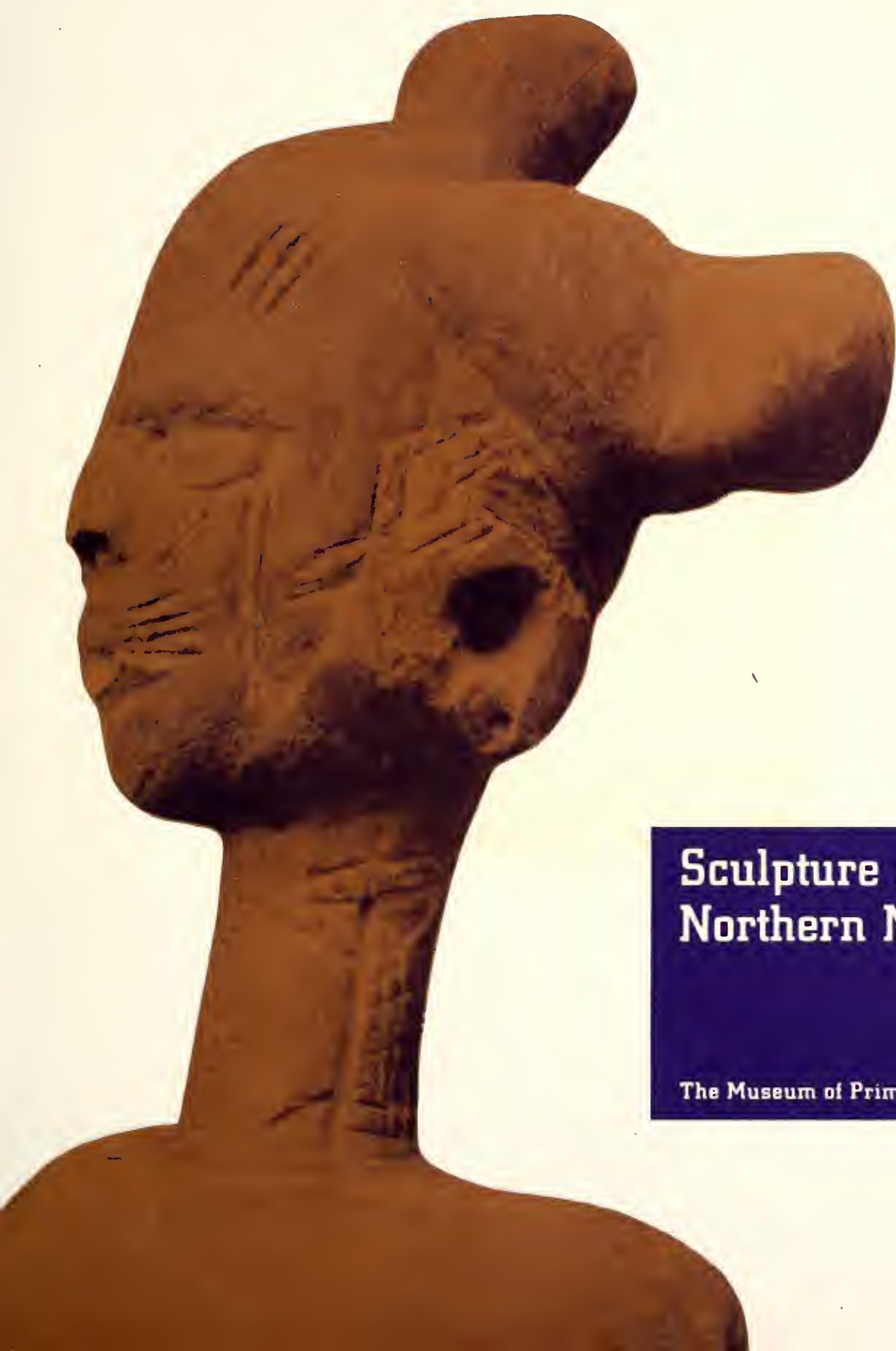
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Sculpture of Northern Nigeria  
by  
Roy Sieber

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# **Sculpture of Northern Nigeria**

**The Museum of Primitive Art**

SCULPTURE OF NORTHERN NIGERIA by Roy Sieber

32 pages; 50 illustrations

\$2.00

The tribal art of Africa has produced a wealth of traditional forms, many in styles which are now famous outside the continent; the art styles of some areas, however, are still scarcely known.

*Sculpture of Northern Nigeria* throws new light on two of these obscure areas, both near the Benue River of Nigeria. The history of the region is one of migrations and cross-currents of conquest ending only in the last century; but despite the shattering impact of such upheavals, the tribes about the Benue River have maintained strong artistic traditions. These traditions have few affinities with the well-known tribal styles of southern Nigeria, but seem rather to be related to western Sudanic forms.

Professor Roy Sieber assembled the material presented here during an expedition to Nigeria in 1958. The illustrations include not only objects now in museums and private collections, but photographs of numerous masks and figures still in use. Professor Sieber defines types of masks, figures and other works, and describes the part they play in the life of the tribes. *Sculpture of Northern Nigeria* gives new evidence of the unexhausted richness and complexity of African art.

THE MUSEUM OF PRIMITIVE ART

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## Sculpture of Northern Nigeria

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*following page: 1 Ikonyi (center) and Odomodo, one of his 'wives' (left). Carved by Okpanachi about 1943. Photographed in Inye village.*

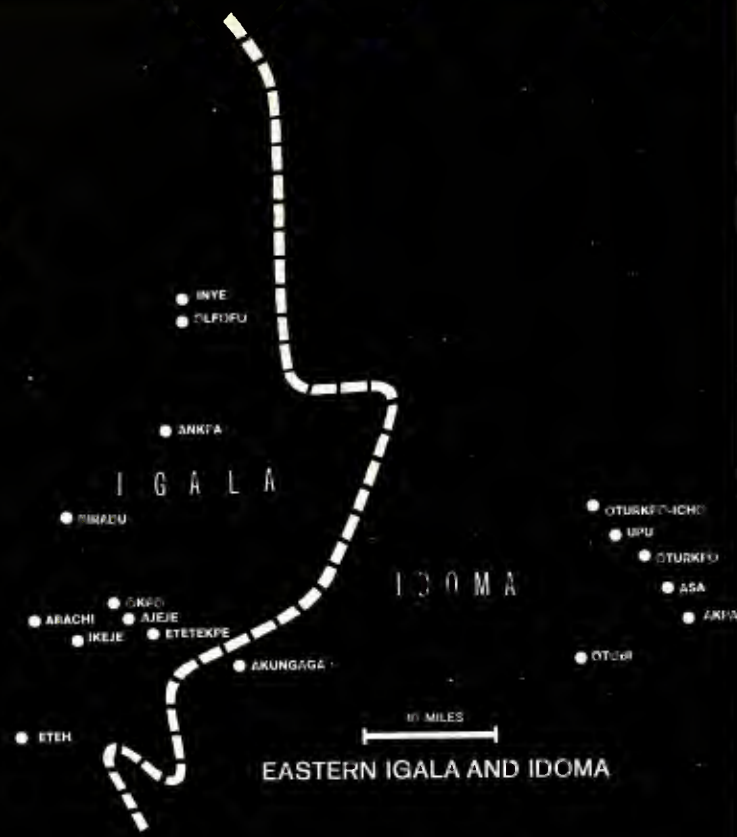




# **sculpture of orthern Nigeria**

**Introduction  
Igala  
Idoma  
Goemai  
Montol  
Jaba  
Notes**

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*This paper deals with the sculpture of five tribes of the Northern Region of Nigeria: the eastern Igala, Idoma, Goemai, Montol and Jaba. These tribes were visited briefly in 1958. The author is grateful to the Ford Foundation for the support which made this field study possible and to the Nigerian Antiquities Commission and the Department of Antiquities for their aid, advice and cooperation in the program of research and in the assembling of a study collection. Because the field contacts were brief—ranging from a few days to a few weeks—and were conducted primarily as a survey concerned with acquiring data on stylistics, this report cannot hope to be more than provisional.*

Roy Sieber

## Introduction

The tribes of Nigeria have produced a wealth of traditional sculptural forms. Many of the tribal styles are well known and well represented in museums and private collections outside Nigeria. Others are almost totally unknown or unreported. Among the latter are the sculptures of a number of small so-called pagan, or non-Moslem, tribes of the Northern Region.

Little is known of the history of this area, of the migrations and counter-migrations, the cross-currents of conquest that ended only with the holy wars of the Mohammedan Fulani in the last century. The inhabitants of the Region are now predominantly Moslem. In their conversion many of the peoples have lost their tribal identity and, as required by Islamic law, have abandoned the figurative arts they might once have practiced. However, it seems certain that the Moslem *jihads* stopped short of the Benue River, for there exist along its banks a number of small tribes that escaped the full impact of Mohammedan religious and political control. Further, it was not until quite recently, in some cases less than a half-century ago, that Europeans first contacted some of these tribes.

Thus through the accident of geography this middle belt escaped the pressures of both Islam and the western world and retains, even now, much of its traditional religion and art. The arts played an important and positive role in these cultures. Conservative and traditional, they sprang from the beliefs and value patterns of the tribe and served to reinforce those values. The artist too was conservative and committed to traditional modes. Yet, from the evidence of the objects, this was not an overwhelmingly restrictive deterrent. Indeed, he functioned within the group, served its ends and earned its rewards as a contributing member of his society.

The sculpture of this area seems little related to the styles of the southern regions of Nigeria. Certain parallels do appear with the Cameroons highlands and the northern Congo. Perhaps more startling is the Sudanic character of some of the forms. It is unfortunate that no traces of traditional figurative arts have been discovered in the intensely Moslemized areas to the ~~north and west~~. However, further research may uncover enough clues to reconstruct with some confidence the stylistic relationships that once existed.

## Igala

The Igala occupy about five thousand square miles of land east of the Niger River and south of the Benue. They number about 300,000 and speak a language related to Idoma and Yoruba. It has been suggested that these tribes share a common origin but were separated long enough ago for rather considerable linguistic differences to develop. It is also possible that the Igala displaced or assimilated an earlier Akpoto group whose modern remnants are the Idoma. In any case, linguistic and cultural parallels exist.<sup>1</sup>

The Igala aristocracy claims descent from the Wukari Jukun. Little remains by way of custom, art or language to substantiate this belief. The possibility of such contact cannot be dismissed, however, for many of the Benue River tribes have traditions of contact with the Jukun empire. In some cases stylistic ties are demonstrable as, for example, the Idoma and Goemai masks discussed below or the instance of a figure in Afo style found in a Wukari shrine.<sup>2</sup>

Further, old ties between the Igala and Benin exist. A part of the ceremonial regalia of the Ata, who resides at Idah, the capital, is an excellent early Benin bronze mask.

A western, or Idah, group and an eastern, or Ankpa, group are to be distinguished on the basis of language. This distinction is echoed in the styles of the sculpture. To the west in the area of Idah, large, black wooden helmet masks are typical.<sup>3</sup> To the east, a second sculptural style is, to my knowledge, unrecorded.

Stylistically the masks and figure carving of the eastern Igala may be characterized by the use of black and white coloring and by the consistent device of depicting the facial area as flat or slightly concave. A similarity to the carving styles of the Idoma and the northern Ibo, and to some masks of the Afo, is evident. More field work needs to be done before it will be possible to piece together with any certainty the reasons for this similarity.

Two days a year are set aside to pay respect to the spirits of the dead. These days, one in the dry season and one in the rainy season, are called Ote Egu (literally: drinks for the spirits) and all Igala masks then appear. In addition some of the masks have other, more specialized functions.

The most important eastern Igala mask is Egu Orumamu, chief of masks [2, 11]. The Igala word for spirit, *egu*, is also the word for mask. Orumamu served as a symbol of authority for the elders. This authority derives from the spirits of the ancestors. Acting as a major tribal agent of social control, its role was essentially judicial. Civil and criminal cases were brought before it, and secondary masked figures whose costumes were of bark cloth enforced the edicts of Orumamu. In the case of murder the family or the village of the murderer were assembled, and forced to discover and give up the criminal. Until the criminal was identified, Orumamu had the power to quarantine a family or an entire village. This could mean economic disaster, for fields went untended and markets unattended. Execution was

performed by a member of the victim's family who had, later, to perform various acts to cleanse himself and to ward off the spirit of his victim.

Second in importance, Egu Anyakatoro [12] often appears with Orumamu and could act in his absence. Anyakatoro is a dangerous mask, one which fights. It was said to be, in character, like a chief's son.

Horizontal masks with animal attributes are found in some eastern Igala villages. One of these, Ikonyi (big mouth), appears in a decidedly threatening manner and is restrained with difficulty by means of a rope tied around his waist and held by a young man [1]. He is accompanied by his two 'wives'. His 'old wife' is called Odomodo (too big) and his 'young wife' Ikelmede (quarrelsome woman).

Ageje [3], Agwom and Igba, three types of cloth masks representing women but worn by men, are owned by men's organizations. Described as the oldest type of Igala dance, the masks perform on the days of the dead, at funerals of important men, and, now, on Mohammedan feast days.

Recently the Igala have imported a number of mask types from the Ibo. In some cases they have taken over mask, dance and music. These are essentially secular in nature and the masks are not treated with the secrecy, awe and respect accorded to traditional tribal masks.

Whereas masks — despite the secrecy that surrounds the human manufacture and manipulation — are essentially public objects, Igala figure carvings [13, 14, 15] are, with one exception, far more private and intimate. Essentially protective in nature, they are believed to bring good luck, wealth and general well-being to the family, and, particularly, to serve as guardians





mus-faced Egu Orumamu. Carved by Ada  
t 1943. Photographed in Okpo village. 3  
e. Woolen wig, appliqué and trade cloth cos-  
e, made about 1951. Photographed at Inye vil-







4 Ogrinya crest. An old  
carved by Ochai. P  
graphed in Otobi vi  
5 Ekwotame. This figu  
placed next to the bodi  
old men at their jun  
Alleged to be at least  
years old, it is in a  
distinct from that of C  
Photographed in Otun  
Icho village.



the children. In 1958 they were very much in use, particularly in small villages, among the more conservative elements in the society. The head of a family would state, as a matter of simple fact, that to be deprived of the figure would certainly bring about his death and that of his children.

Often the figure was accompanied by a carved leopard symbolizing force, strength or courage. In one instance at least the spirits petitioned were ancestral.

Some figure carvings served as calabash stoppers [16, 17]. Set into the top of a calabash containing magical or curative substances, they insure the health and well-being of children.

The only figure type that serves a public function is one used in cases of theft [18]. The accused swears his innocence on the figure, drinking some water that has been poured over it. Should he have sworn falsely he will shortly fall ill or go mad. Only by repaying the theft and by propitiation can he again become well.

In addition to masks and figures the Igala once carved doors [19], stools, food bowls and even clog sandals. Few of these remain, for they have been supplanted by imported objects or techniques. In fact, much of the sculpture cannot be expected to survive for the reasons for its existence are vanishing. British and Koranic law have usurped the powers of Orumamu and the oath image as fully as Japanese enameled tinware has taken the place of carved wooden food bowls.



## Idoma

Numbering about 250,000, the Idoma are the eastern neighbors of the Igala. Anderson reports that some Idoma cloth appliqué masks indicate ties with the Igala, others with the Jukun.<sup>4</sup> Despite the extremely minor references to Idoma art that have been published, this tribe displays an amazingly rich and varied sculptural tradition.<sup>5</sup>

Otobi village, in Akpa District in the center of Idoma country, is a major carving center. Akweya, the language spoken in this area, differs sharply from Idoma.<sup>6</sup> The works produced at Otobi are stylistically distinct and should, at least tentatively, be considered as a sub-style. Two master carvers from Otobi village are particularly noteworthy: Ochai, who died about 1950 [4, 20, 21b, 23]; and Oba, still working in 1958 [21, 21a, 23a]. They exhibit individual style characteristics that are distinct and easily recognized.

Oklenyi of Akungaga village near Igala territory is self-taught. After watching an Igala carver at work he practiced secretly until he became proficient. He receives a good deal of local recognition both by Igala and Idoma clients. Stylistically, his works evidence their mixed cultural background.

Individual inventiveness is not only permitted but encouraged by the Idoma. Artists work as time permits, stockpiling carvings—particularly face masks and figures—against demand. The use of a figure or a mask is determined by the purchaser and is not preestablished as with a commissioned piece. At the same time works can be commissioned from the carver, particularly, it is to be suspected, the larger masks.

The Idoma have a number of secret and semi-secret dance guilds. Many of these were headhunting societies which have become desanctified since that practice was outlawed. Each society has its own distinctive mask and formerly the public dances of the society were identified with the mask. Dance guilds were particularly highly developed among the Akweya. This might account in part for the more intensive carving tradition in that district.

The most powerful of the dance guilds, the Ogrinya society, was limited to men who had killed an elephant, a lion or a man. The mask, a crestpiece [4] would appear publicly at harvest time and at the funerals of members of the society. The performances of this mask were accompanied by an intense sense of drama and the mask itself appeared only briefly during the dance.<sup>7</sup>

Another society, composed of elders, possessed a large horizontal mask [20, 20a] usually over six feet in length representing an elephant. The society was called Akatakpulakpula. This mask also appeared at harvest time and at the funerals of members of the society.

Ekutakpa crests [21b, 21c] appear at harvest time. The millet crop is shared by the men and women because the men have done the heavy work, preparing the fields, and the women have tended the growing grain. At harvest time men, wearing these



crests, guard the farms to keep the women from making off with more than their share. Tower-like and geometric in character, the crests occasionally include a face or head.

Within the last generation many dance guilds have lost their secret character and their dances have become popular entertainments. Some of the groups can now be hired to appear at important events [22].

Figure carvings, with the exception of those used to ward off witches and a few used as toys, are predominantly of the type called Anjenu [23, 23a]. Anjenu is a spirit that lives in the water or bush and appears in dreams. The figures can be used to cure illnesses, insure good luck or, more commonly, bring about human fertility. Anjenu is petitioned and promised the sacrifice of a goat after a child is born.

The Idoma are more committed to their sculptural traditions than many tribes longer or more intensively in contact with the Mohammedan or western worlds. Thus a great number of Idoma carvings are in use, and are still being produced. However certain evidences of change are apparent, as is shown by the secularization of the dance societies.

*below: 6 Mongop. This highly stylized mask represents a human head. The two projections to the right represent forehead and mouth with an eye between. The shelf-like top represents the head with a topknot to the left. An old mask carved by Dakut. Photographed in Kwande village. opposite: 7 Ceremony at Jelbam Hill near the graves of former chiefs. Photographed in 1957 by Robin Jagoe.*

## Goemai

The city of Shendam is currently the administrative center of the Lowlands Division of the Plateau Province of Northern Nigeria. It lies about 60 miles north of the Benue River and approximately 200 miles east of the confluence of the Benue and Niger Rivers.

The Goemai tribe, perhaps better known by the Hausa term Ankwe (a designation they firmly resist), occupy the territory to the south and west of Shendam. They number perhaps 20,000. Shendam, the residence of the paramount chief, the Long Goemai, is less than one hundred miles from Wukari, capital of the Jukun empire.

The Shemankar River flows from northwest to southeast intersecting the land of the Goemai. During the rainy season the river rises and hinders contact between these two segments of the tribe. It empties into the Benue almost opposite Ibi, an early river-based administrative post.

The major mask type found to the southwest of the Shemankar clearly shows Jukun influence [6, 25, 26]. It is the type called Akumaga by the Jukun, and represents a highly stylized human head.<sup>8</sup> A knob at the back, usually with a feather attached, represents a topknot such as is still worn by some Jukun and Goemai men, including the Long Goemai.

The villages where this mask is to be found — Kwane, Kurgwi and Bakinchawa—are described as having once been quite important, possibly because they were on or near a major north-south trade route that connected them with Ibi and Wukari.

The mask has been adapted to local tradition and is called Mongop. It officiates at the installations and burials of chiefs and otherwise appears only once a year during the dry season. It would seem to be the authority symbol for chieftainship and to be associated with agriculture.

Northeast of the Shemankar River a quite different mask type is found. It may be indicative of an older, indigenous model for it also appears among the Montol. (As noted below, the Montol were not under Jukun influence.) This type, called Gugwom by both the Goemai and Montol, has a function similar, if not identical, to Mongop.

A number of fiber masks [27] are also found among the Goemai.

Figure carvings [28, 29] are, for the most part, associated with Kwompten, a men's society.<sup>9</sup> The activities of this society are kept secret from the women and uninitiated men. It seems primarily involved in curing rites and herbalism. A few of the members own figures which are used in divining the cause of illness. After a successful cure the patient must furnish the society with a goat and millet for sacrifice and for a feast. The society has songs and dances celebrating the cure.

The figures are treated with respect. Food and sexual taboos must be observed before they can be handled.

Another figure type combines a body in the normal Goemai









style with Gugwom-like head. These appear yearly at the end of harvest and are probably associated with ancestral rites [7]. The ceremonies with which they are associated take place at the foot of a sacred hill near the graves of the former paramount chiefs.<sup>10</sup>

Meek illustrates a seated female figure which he identifies only as an Ankwe (i.e. Goemai) "juju".<sup>11</sup> He fails to note that the figure is of terra cotta. Similar pieces are in the Jos Museum, the British Museum and are reported from Wukari and, surprisingly, one is reputed to have been excavated at Kano.

The Long Goemai has reported to the Director of Antiquities at Jos that all these figures were made by one woman, named Azume.<sup>12</sup> Azume was an unusually excellent potter whose work was commissioned for prestige items among Goemai women. He restated this in 1958 and indicated that Azume was the wife of an elder brother, that she had died about 1951, that only one other woman has ever made such figures and that she had learned from Azume but was not as competent. This woman, who died in 1958, is apparently responsible for several indifferent examples in the Jos Museum. With the exception of these the examples do appear to be by the same hand. The evidence for the figure excavated at Kano seems vague and, at this point, inconclusive.

Many examples were given to visiting Europeans by the Long Goemai [30]. Others were reported to have been used ritually, although details of their use were not forthcoming.

This may be an instance of an unusual capability which survives only for the lifetime of the artist, is not transmitted as a craft and does not become part of the repertory of the tribe.

It should be noted that carvings purchased from the Montol and Kanam were observed in use by the Goemai. The Kanam figures were used to counteract the effects of the bite of a particular spotted snake.

## Montol

The Montol live to the north and east of the Goemai, number about 10,000 and occupy less than 200 square miles of land. They were outside the sphere of influence of the Jukun and the style of their carvings is similar to that found rather widely among the pagan tribes of this area.

Many netted fiber masks appear among the Montol [8] but only one sculptural type [9, 31] was observed. The only illustration of this type is in the 1952-1953 *Annual Report* of the Nigerian Antiquities Service, and is there identified only as having come from Shendam Division. It is identical to the Goemai Gugwom and goes by that name among the Montol. It comes out at the time of the millet harvest and it supervises the burial of chiefs but not their installation. In the examples still in ritual use the carver's name was kept secret; in collected pieces his name was freely given.

Most of the figure carvings [32, 33, 34] are for the Komti society—the same as Kwompten among the Goemai.

Three Montol figure carvings are illustrated in von Sydow. They were collected about 1905 and although stylistically similar are by no means identical to the examples currently in use. Two factors may have affected carving styles in this area. First, the Pax Britannica has permitted more inter-tribal contacts and greater influences to play upon the arts. For example, it has been noted that the Goemai use carvings from other tribes. Further, figures purchased from the Piapum and Yergum were observed in use among the Montol. Secondly, a carver of merit and strong personal force can influence and, in fact, direct a tribal style. This is the case with the Montol carver Namni whose work [31, 34] was everywhere and whose individual style clearly has affected younger carvers. He has been carving for at least thirty years and is well represented among the Montol. In addition many of his carvings are to be found in Goemai villages.

To this point it seems that figures in this general style complex—and used in curing rites—are produced from the Goemai, Montol and Kanam northward through the Angas. It is probable that the Yergum make them. They are sold in Piapum market although it is uncertain that they are carved there. They are found among the Mirriam speaking peoples, but are imported, primarily from Kanam.<sup>14</sup> Further research should clarify the geographical spread of this figure type although it may prove difficult to ascertain its origin.

## Jaba

The Jaba or Ham are a tribe of about 26,000. One of their villages, Nok, is the type-site of the important terracotta-producing Nok Culture of about 2,000 years ago. Highly abstract crepe pieces [35, 36] related to agriculture, and drinking cups [10] of human form, are for the most part carved for the Jaba by sculptors of the neighboring Koro tribe.<sup>15</sup>





8 9



10

8 Gam. A fiber mask that appears at the time of the millet harvest. Photographed at Tunkus village. 9 Gugwom. Carver's name a secret, made about 1948. Photographed at Lalin village. 10 Cup used for ritual palm-wine drinking. Such Gbene are used once a year during a ceremonial sacrifice and at second burials. Carved by Kwasau (a Koro) in 1958. 24" high.

## Notes

- 1 The only published survey of the Igala is R. G. Armstrong, "The Igala" in *Peoples of the Niger-Benue Confluence*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, Western Africa, Part X, ed. by Daryll Forde, International African Institute, London, 1955. See also: William Fagg, *Nigerian Tribal Art*, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1960, nos. 285-290.
- 2 Illustrated in Eckart von Sydow, *Afrikanische Plastik*, George Wittenborn, Inc., New York, 1954, pl. 117. It is incorrectly described as Jukun.
- 3 These royal masks have been published by K. C. Murray, "Idah Masks", *Nigerian Field*, Vol. XIV, No. 3, July 1949, pp. 85-92. Further research by John Boston among the western Igala and nearby groups has not yet been published.
- 4 R. G. Armstrong, "The Idoma-Speaking Peoples", *Peoples of the Niger-Benue Confluence*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 96 and 121.
- 5 K. C. Murray, *Masks and Headdresses of Nigeria*, The Zwemmer Gallery, London, 1949, no. 1. William Fagg, *op. cit.*, nos. 291-294.
- 6 Armstrong, *loc. cit.*, p. 148.
- 7 Armstrong, R. G. Personal communication.
- 8 C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., London, 1931, p. 273. Murray, *op. cit.*, No. 2. Fagg, *op. cit.*, No. 305. von Sydow, *op. cit.*, pl. 116c.
- 9 Robert Netting spells this Komtoeng and reports that it refers to the leaf of a tree and is a synonym for magic or medicine in several languages in this area. Letter 4 September, 1961. I have indicated slightly differing pronunciations among the Goemai and Montol.
- 10 Verbal communication from Robin Jagoe, formerly the District Officer. He observed and photographed the ceremonies on 18 November 1957.
- 11 C. K. Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria*, 2 v., 1925.
- 12 Verbal communication from Bernard Fagg, Director of Antiquities, Nigeria.
- 13 *Op. cit.*, pl. 119.
- 14 This tentative listing is in part derived from Netting, *loc. cit.*
- 15 Fagg, *op. cit.*, nos. 325-327.





11

12



1 Egu Orumamu. Carved about 1941 by Egbodu, an old man who was no longer working in 1958. Collected from Chief Akpa of Ikeje village, the mask is now in Jos Museum. 23" high.

2 Egu Anyakatoro. Carved by Ema of Agala village about 1946. Collected from Okpo village, now in Jos Museum. About 14" high.









13 Family protective figure, carved by Etodu (the owner) about 1949. Etodu had allowed his father's protective figure to be destroyed by termites. His father's spirit appeared to him and instructed him to carve a replacement. It is a composite of a number of carvings fastened together. Photographed at Etetekpe village. About 36" high. 14 Family protective figure, carved by Ifene Ubojojo (the owner) about 1949. Originally a leopard accompanied this figure, but it was destroyed by termites. The owner of this figure refused permission to photograph it or to sell it until he had carved a replacement. He then refused permission to photograph the replacement. Collected in Abachi village, now in Jos Museum. About 12" high.

15 Detail of a family protective figure. Unlike most such figures, this is carved of extremely hard wood. A great deal of local fame surrounded this piece, partly because of its age—about a century—and partly because the present owner's father had used it for curative purposes outside the immediate family. Carved by Ako. Photographed in Etetekpe village.

14





16



17

16 Inyama, a family guardian figure, said to bring good luck and riches and to serve as a protector of children. The upraised arms may represent a Moslem praying gesture. Carved by Adoyi in 1955, collected in Biradu village. Carved portion 6" high. 17 Carved calabash stopper, called Alijenu, used for illness and fertility. Apparently identical to the Anjenu objects of the Idoma tribe. This example illustrates a proverb: "Leopard tried to catch hornbill, but hornbill flew off with leopard." Carved in 1958 by Ekuje of Ojugo village, collected in Etch. 17" long. 18 Oath image. Photographed in Ajeje village market. About 30" high. 19 Door carved by Uja about 1941, collected in Abachi village. Carved doors were formerly placed at the main entrance to the compound and served to indicate the importance of the owner. 49" x 31".

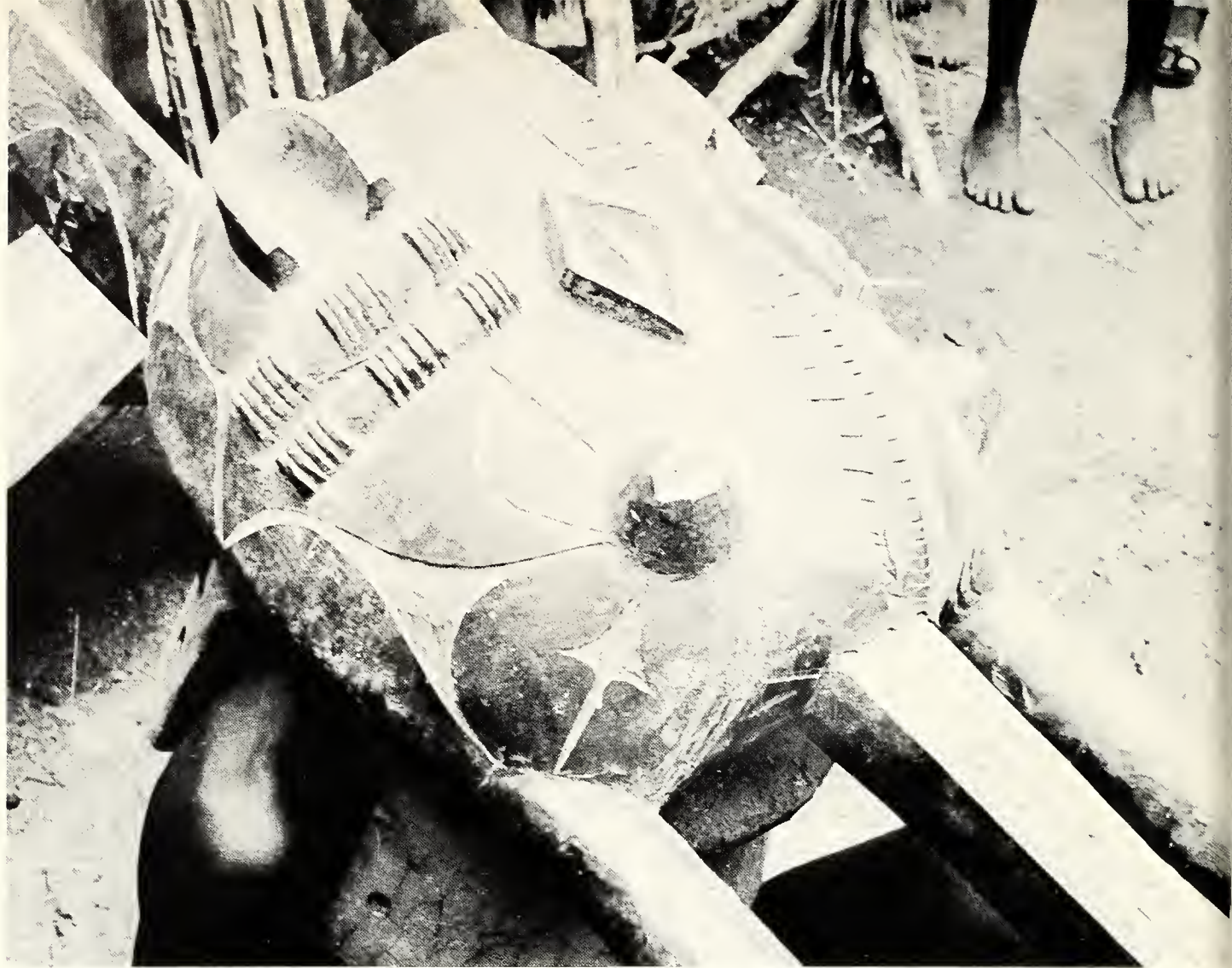




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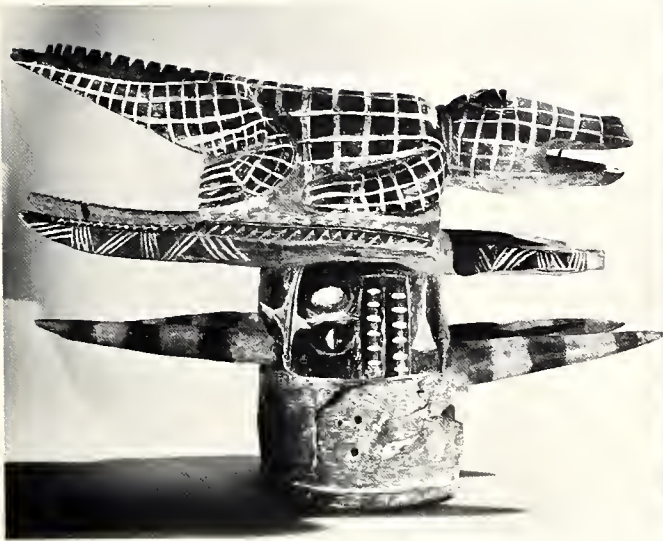
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20 Akatakpulakpula, also known as Utro Eku (chief of masks). Carved by Ochai about 1944. About 6' long. 20a Detail of 20. A similar mask collected in Asa village but carved by Oba of Otobi is now in Jos Museum. 21 Eku (crocodile) dance mask. Representing a crocodile and a bush cow, this mask also appears at funerals with 21a. Carved by Oba of Otobi village in 1955, collected in Upu village. 27" long. 21a Idire (snake) dance mask. Carved by Oba of Otobi village, collected in Upu village. 19" long.

20a





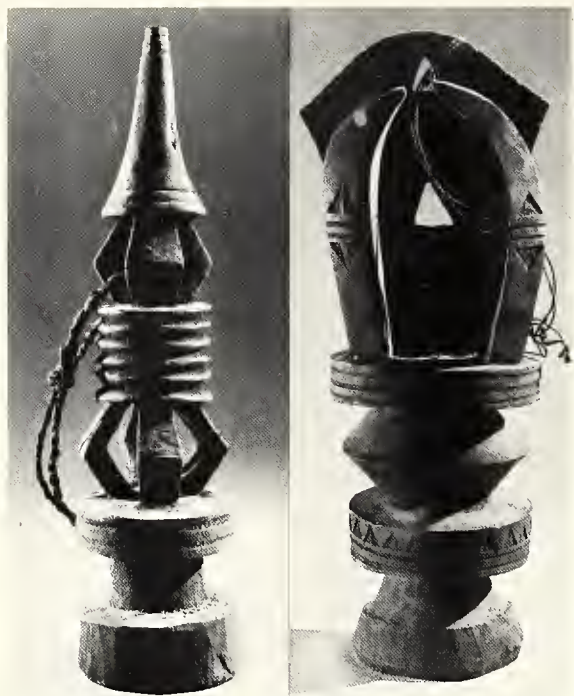


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21a





21b, 21c Ekwutakpa crests. 21b carved by Ochai in 1946.  
15" high. 21c carved by Ogwebe about 1941. 14" high.







22 Group of masks photographed in Akpagedde village. Lower left mask was carved by Eyimogo of Akpagedde about 1940. All others carved by Adaba of Otobi village about 1946. 23 Anjenu. Carved by Ochai about 1944. Photographed in Otobi village. Right-hand figure is now in Jos Museum. 23a Anjenu figure. Carved by Oba about 1944, collected in Otobi village. 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 24 Anjenu. Bowl with lid decorated with carved human head flanked by two hornbills. Commissioned from Oklenyi in 1958, Akungaga village. 17" high.









25 Mongop, carved by Langkwap. This is the major mask of this type in the area, and is said to have been in existence long before the present Fan (keeper) took over responsibility for it. It is accompanied by a fiber mask which speaks in a guttural (and possibly secret) language. Two men with calabash rattles guide the mask, women remove their headcloths as a mark of respect. Photographed in Bakinchiawa village.

26 Mongop. Carved by Dolnan about 1948. Photographed in Kurgwi village.

27 Left Dabit. An important fiber mask which serves a judicial function. Right Dongkongkom, messenger for Dabit. The masks, which were inherited by the present village head, are old, the costumes are renewed each year. Photographed at M'gbo village.







28



29







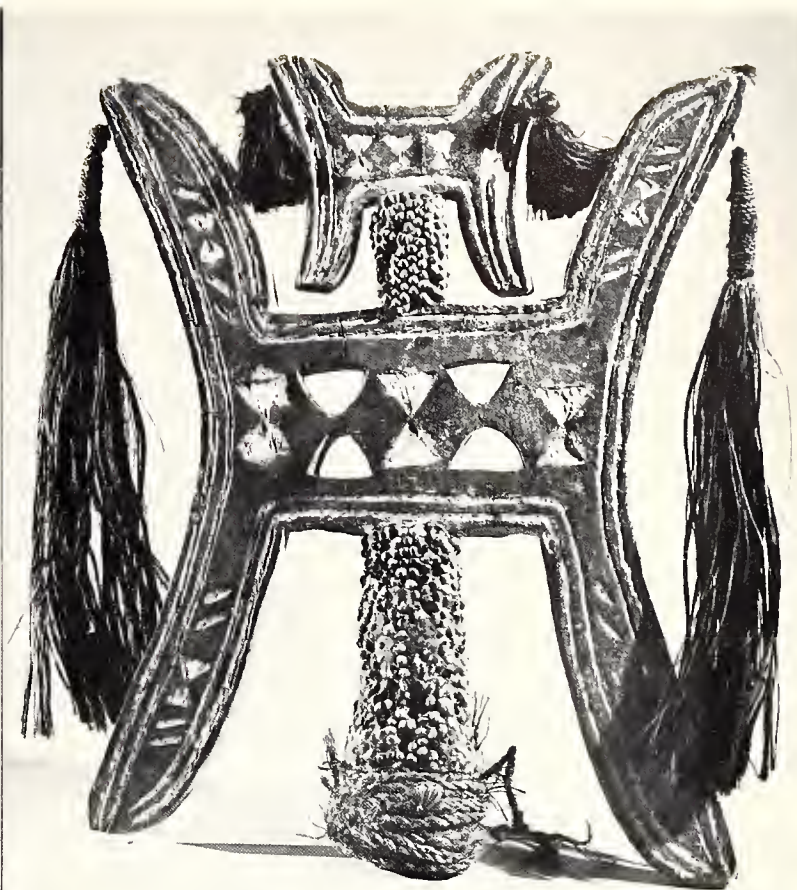
28 Detail of a figure owned and carved by Longte about 1950. This figure had never been used ritually. Collected in Kurgwi village, now in Jos Museum. 29 Carved figure for the Kwompten society, called Takindi, used to divine the cause of illness. After a successful cure, the patient must furnish a goat and millet for sacrifice and for a celebration by the society. Carved by Lahore of Yeliva village about 1948. 18" high. 30 Pottery head, fragment of a full figure, made by Azume. Gift of the Long Goemai, Shendam. 2¾" high. 31 Gugwom mask. Carved by Namni about 1928. Although carved by a Montol this mask was owned by the head of Longvel, a Goemai village. 26" long.







36



35

Diviner's figure for Komtin (apparently identical to the Goemai Kwompten society). Carved about 1952. Carver's name not remembered. Collected in Lalin village. 12" high. 33 Figure for personal use, though said to be associated also with the Komtin society. Carved by Fumtay about 1953. Collected in Lalin village. 9" high. 34 Kwompten figures. Carved by Namni about 1942. Although carved by Namni, a Montol, they are in use with four others by Namni in Sawut, a Goemai village, where they were photographed. 35 Dance crest called amfaik (guardian of Faik village). Appears twice a year with other masks. Carved by Diga (a Koro) about 1943. 17" high. 36 Dance crest called Ngam-k (man with bowed legs). Appears with preceding crest. Carved by Diga (a Koro) about 1939. From Kanye village. 17" high.



37

*This book was prepared in conjunction with an exhibition held at The Museum of Primitive Art of the Roy Sieber collection. The following items were shown:*

#### IGALA

- 1 Door. *See fig. 19.*
- 2 Figure commissioned from Etodu of Etetekpe village. Basically in traditional eastern Igala style, the parrot on the shoulder (because some men like to carry them thus) and the woodpecker (because carving is of wood) are decorative additions. 23½" high. *See fig. 37.*
- 3 Inyama. *See fig. 16.*
- 4 Carved calabash stopper, Alijenu. *See fig. 17.*
- 5 Woman's stool. Made in Idah, this represents the western Igala type. Collected in Etch from a widow of a former Ata (paramount chief) of the Igala. Carved in 1957. 11" high
- 6 Woman's stool of eastern Igala type. Collected near Okpo. 5" high
- 7 Anklets of brass bells cast by lost wax process. Worn by women of noble families. Collected at Etch

#### IDOMA

- 8, 9 Pair of dance masks representing a husband and wife. Used primarily for entertainment, the dance is called Aringa: to know evil and to know good. Carved by Oba. Collected in Otobi village. Husband (1954) 9¼" high. Wife (1957) 8¾" high. *See figs. 38, 39.*
- 10 Agahama mask. Agahama (scratching grass) is unpleasant; so are funerals at which this mask appears. Carved by Oba in 1958. Collected in Otobi village. 9" high. *See fig. 40.*
- 11 Odugba dance mask. Carved by Oklenyi in 1958. Collected in Akun-gaga village. 9" high. *See fig. 41.*
- 12 Eku (crocodile) dance mask. *See fig. 21.*
- 13 Idire (snake) dance mask. *See fig. 21a.*
- 14, 15 Ekutakpa crests. *See figs. 21b, 21c.*
- 16 Anjenu figure. *See fig. 23a.*

38 39



40 41





42 43

17 Figure representing a lady school teacher preaching in church. Apparently a commemorative or ancestral figure. Carved by Oklenyi in 1958. Collected in Akungaga village. 17" high

18, 19 Carved in Otobi village in 1952, these figures show the effects of neglect. Termites have badly damaged one and all but destroyed the other. The use to which figures are put is determined by the purchaser; they may be used for Anjenu, ancestor worship or as toys. These were used as toys. 13½" and 11½" high. *See figs. 42, 43.*

20 Anjenu stopper for a calabash. It represents a hornbill. Carved by Akpatuma in 1955. Collected in Upu. 11½" high

21 Anjenu. *See fig. 24.*

#### GOEMAI

22 Pottery head. *See fig. 30.*

23 Carved figure, called Takindi, used to divine the cause of illness. After a successful cure the patient must furnish a goat and millet for sacrifice and for a celebration by the society. Carved by Lahore of Yelwa village about 1948. 18" high. *See fig. 29.*

24 Figure used by a Goemai but carved by a Kanam (reported to be a very small nearby tribe). Used to treat snakebite, it is called Dak-zwom (dak—doctor of medicine; zwom—spotted poisonous snake). Collected in Darlit village. 11½" high. Lent by Dr. Gwendolen Carter. *See fig. 44.*

25 Woman's stool, carved about 1948. Kwande village. 11" high

26 Woman's stool carved in Nupe style. Kwande village. 10" high

27 Decorated calabash. Collected in Kwande village. 12" high

#### MONTOL

28 Gugwom mask. Associated with agriculture this mask appears at the times of planting and harvest and also appears at the burials of chiefs. Carved by Danpeh about 1948. Collected in Lalin village. 30" long

29 Gugwom mask. *See fig. 31.*

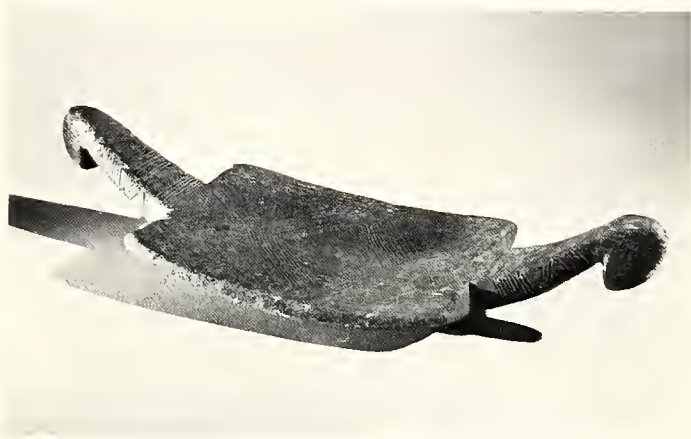
30 Diviner's figure for Komtin. *See fig. 32.*

31 Figure for personal use. *See fig. 33.*

44



2



45

#### JABA

- 32 Dance crest, Nyamfaik. *See fig. 35.*
- 33 Dance crest, Ngamdak. *See fig. 36.*
- 34 Painted fiber costume for preceding mask. Made by Diga in 1955
- 35 Cup. *See fig. 10.*
- 36 Decorated calabash which contained a vegetable oil used as a cosmetic by women. Collected in Nok village. 7" high

#### JARAWA

- 37 Decorated woman's headboard used for carrying loads. Collected in Fobur village. 20½" long. *See fig. 45.*

#### Sources of photographs:

Robin Jagoe no. 7

Lisa Little nos. 10, 16, 17, 19, 21, 21a, 21b, 21c, 23a, 24, 29, 30, 31, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45

Roy Sieber nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 20a, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36

Maps by W. Giacalone



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